

Testimony IN SUPPORT of SB-63 for Paid Sick Days  
Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 2010

Testimony for the Labor Committee on Paid Sick Days legislation:

I write in regards to legislation providing workers with paid sick leave. I think it is particularly important to support the bill this year because it is an issue that has been affecting me for many years and it cannot wait any longer.

Last year I had two part time jobs, both in the food service industry, which did not give me any paid sick days at all.

An unfortunate aspect of not having paid sick days is that I cannot take care of my children when they are sick. However I am one of few people lucky enough to have a very supportive family who helps me take care of my children, I don't know what I would do without them.

Last year one of my co-workers took time off because he caught the flu at work. My boss cut his hours and even now he doesn't have as many hours as he did before because he took time off from work to recover from his illness and wanted to punish him. Instances like this make me afraid of taking time off from work when I am sick. I never missed work because I worried about losing my jobs. I couldn't even take my daughter to the emergency room without fearing that my bosses will cut my hours.

Not only does not having paid sick days prevent me from taking care of my children when they are sick but also it makes it hard for me to schedule regular appointments with the doctor for them. Fortunately my sister or my mother is able to make their appointments and take them to their appointments.

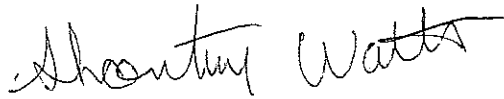
In one instance two years ago, I had to go to work with pneumonia. I was so sick that I went to the hospital and although I was advised to stay home and rest, yet I had to go to work sick because I couldn't afford to not get paid. Not only did I have to come in contact with many customers which I could have gotten sick but it also affected my job performance. For example, at my job I had to put the cash for the day in a slot, however since I was so sick I accidentally threw it in the trashcan. Luckily, the trash had not been collected, so my manager was able to go into the dumpster to collect the

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money. The company could have lost more money from me coming to work sick than if they had just paid me to stay at home and get better. It would have been better for both me and for my employer to give me a paid sick day, because I would have been more productive and wouldn't have run the risk of getting customers sick which could have resulted in a lawsuit.

Supporting paid sick days legislation is extremely important for all businesses and workers, especially for working mothers such as myself. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shontay Watts". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Shontay Watts